

There are so many dedicated and talented women in the schools of the 16th congressional district of Texas who deserve to be recognized and thanked for their commitment to providing the best possible education to our children. From Rosa Guerrero, a pioneer in education who was awarded a lifelong membership to the Texas Parent Teachers Association and was the first Hispanic woman in El Paso to have a school named after her, to our more recent Texas Teachers of the Year, we have been blessed with many dedicated and talented women in the classroom. Across the country, female educators make up 76 percent of the classroom workforce and serve as the core of the teaching profession, inspiring and supporting our youth. El Paso has been particularly blessed with incredible female educators and their work has been recognized year after year by the State of Texas and the Texas Teacher of the Year program. I am proud to note that El Paso has had ten Texas Teachers of the Year and six have been strong and passionate women.

Today's teachers are working under a tough budget crisis. Yet, in such difficult times our teachers continue to work hard every day to educate and inspire our children. Education is one of the fundamental building blocks of our Nation, and our teachers deserve to be acknowledged for all of their hard work and dedication.

In honor of Women's History Month, I would like to salute all the women in our classrooms in the 16th District of Texas, and also enter the names of the previous female recipients of the Texas Teacher of the Year Award from my congressional district.

NAMES OF EL PASO'S FEMALE TEXAS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Yushica Walker, Texas Teacher of the Year for 2010—Morehead Middle School

Christine Gleason, Texas Teacher of the Year for 2009—Fabens High School

Dana K. Boyd, Texas Teacher of the Year for 2007—Dolphin Terrace Elementary School

Kyann McMillie, Texas Teacher of the Year for 2004—Canutillo Elementary School

Rosa E. Lujan, Texas Teacher of the Year for 1992—Ysleta Elementary School

Rita Harlien, Texas Teacher of the Year for 1982—Eastwood High School

HONORING MR. BLAS CASTAÑEDA

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 31, 2011*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Mr. Blas Castañeda. Mr. Castañeda is the External Affairs and Economic Development Officer at Laredo Community College in Laredo, Texas. He dedicates his career to educating the next generation of highly skilled workforce and fostering growth in the business community in Laredo and South Texas.

Mr. Castañeda contributes to the community of South Texas by fostering close working relationships between public and private partnerships and regional planning for public and higher education. He is continuously and proactively engaged with the local, state, and international businesses along the Texas-Mexico border. As Laredo Community College's

economic development officer, he has brought major capital facilities for the Laredo Community College. He is the leader in developing and maintaining the distance learning program that is part of the virtual college of Texas online systems. Mr. Castañeda also established the Laredo District V Scholarship Bound program in 1989, which has awarded several hundred thousand dollars in scholarships to talented youth of limited income.

His career began when he was elected council member to the Laredo City Council in 1988 and served for eight years, including as Mayor pro tempore. Governor Ann Richards appointed him to the Texas Workforce Investment Council in 1990 where he served for four years. By 2006, he was on the Board of the Future of the Region Inc. as Ex-Officio President and as President. This organization serves a 47-county, non-profit economic development initiative that addresses key issues in South Texas. In January of 2009, Mr. Castañeda was nominated to be a member of the South Texas Workforce Solutions Board and he represents Adult and Continuing Education. He also serves on the Board for the Texas Migrant Council, which promotes family literacy, education, and consumer education in Texas, Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, New Mexico, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Nevada. Mr. Castañeda continues his efforts for the community as a member of organizations including Big Brother/Big Sister, Rio South Texas Workplace Literacy Council, and the Texas Community College Teachers Association.

Mr. Castañeda is a highly respected member of the South Texas community. He has received numerous awards such as the Liberty Bell Award, the "Salute to Labor" Star Award, and the Tejano's High Achievers Award. The Laredo Independent School District recently named him a "Tiger Legend" for his dedication and for serving as a role model to Laredo's youth.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize Mr. Blas Castañeda's accomplishments and service in South Texas. His tireless efforts for economic development and education have truly impacted the community.

TRIBUTE TO DEBBI HUFFMAN GUTHRIE

**HON. KEN CALVERT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 31, 2011*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, California are exceptional. Riverside has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Debbi Guthrie is one of these individuals. On March 24, 2011, Debbi will be honored as the "Citizen of the Year" at the 111th Inaugural Celebration of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce.

Debbi Huffman Guthrie is retired from her 27-year career as the third-generation owner of a roofing company established by her grandfather in 1921. Since 1993, Debbi has served as a Director with Provident Bank, a

publicly traded, community bank established in Riverside in 1957. Debbi is the current and former member of numerous organizations including: member, Riverside Community College District Capital Campaign Executive Committee; Chair, Riverside Aquatics Complex Fundraising Committee; Chair, Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce Inaugural Ball Committee; Chair, ATHENA of the Inland Valleys Committee; Member, Board of Directors—Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce; Member, Riverside Sport Hall of Fame Induction Celebration Committee; Trustee, University of California Riverside Foundation; Chair, University of California Riverside A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management Dean's Leadership Council; Chairwoman, Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce; Chair, Governmental Affairs Committee and Leadership Riverside Program, Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce; President and Member, Kiwanis Club of Riverside; President, Riverside Community College District Foundation; State Director, ATHENA Foundation; March Air Force Base Military Affairs Committee (Honorary Commander's Program); Inland Empire Council Boy Scouts of America, Distinguished Citizens Committee; and Junior League of Riverside.

Debbi is the recipient of many awards including: the 2010 Riverside YWCA Irene Bonnett Volunteer of the Year; the 2010 Riverside Downtown Partnership Roy Hord "Volunteer of the Year"; the 2003 Association of Agency Executives, Spirit of the Non-Profit Award; the 2003 Gold Key Award, Soroptimist Club; the 2001 Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen Award; the Riverside Community College Inaugural Community Service Award; the 2001 Kiwanis International George Hixson Fellowship Award; the 2001 President's Award, Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce; the 2000 Management Leader of the Year, Private Sector, UC Riverside A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management; and the 1999–2000 Volunteer of the Year, Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce.

In addition to her continued involvement with Provident Bank and her volunteer commitments in Riverside, Debbi now lives part-time in southern Utah where she takes pride in working with her husband to manage their 1300-acre ranch. She enjoys being with her family, horseback riding, house-boating on Lake Powell, hikes in Zion National Park and international travel with friends. Debbi is a native of Riverside and attended Ramona High School and California State University, San Bernardino. Debbi and her husband, Jim, have four adult daughters and four grandchildren.

In light of all Debbi has done for the community of Riverside, the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce named Debbi their Citizen of the Year. Debbi's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Riverside, California. She has been the heart and soul of many community organizations and events and I am proud to call her a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for her service and salute her as she receives this prestigious award.